



“The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.”

~Matthew 13:37-39

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

8th Sunday after Pentecost – July 23, 2023

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Rev. Katie McNeal, Presiding Minister

Maizy Fisher, Director of Music Ministries

*We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning!
Know that you are welcome here just as you are.*

If you are looking for a church to call home, why not consider making this one your own? If this is your first time visiting us, please fill out the visitor information card stapled to your bulletin.

*Everything you need to follow worship can be found in this bulletin. As you are comfortable, please rise when there is an * and join in the congregational responses, noted in **bold**.*

All songs are marked with numbers. The red book in the pew has all the songs. Look for the large number in the upper corner of the page to find the correct song.

*During the time of **Peace**, you are invited to turn to those around you and offer a word of peace.*

We suggest a handshake and saying, "Peace be with you." You are also welcomed to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.). Hand sanitizer is available in each pew.

*At the time of **Offering**, you are invited to share a gift as you are comfortable. You may also place any updates to our ongoing prayer list using the yellow cards in the pews and placing them in the offering plates.*

*At the time of **Holy Communion**, all are welcome to come forward via the center aisle, receive the elements, and return via the side aisles. We begin at the front of the right side, commune all on the right side, then we will invite the left side forward. When you come forward, you may receive the bread from the pastor, then pre-filled cups with wine or grape juice from the assisting minister. You may consume the elements after receiving them then place the empty cup in the tray held by the acolyte. Those who do not receive Holy Communion are welcome to come forward for a blessing.*

If you need a restroom, restrooms are located on the bottom floor at the far side of the building from the elevator. Restrooms may be accessed either via the stairs in the rear of the sanctuary, the stairs by the Greeting Area, or the elevator.

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to fill out the blue prayer request forms located in each pew. The cards will be collected during our hymn of the day, and prayers will be offered during the prayers of intercession.

PRELUDE and ANNOUNCEMENTS

*GATHERING SONG *This Is My Father's World* (ELW 824)



1 This is my Fa-ther's world, and to my lis-t'ning ears all
2 This is my Fa-ther's world; the birds their car-ols raise; the
3 This is my Fa-ther's world; oh, let me not for-get that,



na-ture sings, and round me rings the mu-sic of the spheres.
morn-ing light, the lil-y white, de-clare their mak-er's praise.
though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the rul-er yet.



This is my Fa-ther's world; I rest me in the thought of
This is my Fa-ther's world; he shines in all that's fair. In the
This is my Fa-ther's world; why should my heart be sad? The



rocks and trees, of skies and seas; his hand the won-ders wrought.
rus-ling grass I hear him pass; he speaks to me ev'-ry-where.
Lord is king, let heav-en ring; God reigns, let earth be glad!

*GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who greets us in this and every season,
whose word never fails,
whose promise is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.

Merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned.
We have hurt our community.
We have squandered your blessings.
We have hoarded your bounty.
In the name of Jesus,
forgive us and grant us your mercy.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Righteous God,
we confess that we have sinned.
We have failed to be honest.
We have lacked the courage to speak.
We have spoken falsely.
In the name of Jesus,
forgive us and grant us your mercy.
Silence is kept for reflection.

God is a cup of cold water when we thirst.
God offers boundless grace when we fail.
In God's goodness, we are free to claim the gift of God's mercy:
we are freed and forgiven
in the name of † Jesus Christ.
Amen.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 44:6-8

A reading from Isaiah.

⁶Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel,
and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:

I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.

⁷Who is like me? Let them proclaim it,
let them declare and set it forth before me.

Who has announced from of old the things to come?
Let them tell us what is yet to be.

⁸Do not fear, or be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
You are my witnesses!

Is there any god besides me?
There is no other rock; I know not one.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 86:11-17

¹¹Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.

¹²**I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart,
and glorify your name forevermore.**

¹³For great is your love toward me;
you have delivered me from the pit of death.

¹⁴**The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a band of violent people seeks my life;
they have not set you before their eyes.**

¹⁵But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

¹⁶**Turn to me and have mercy on me;
give your strength to your servant, and save the child of your handmaid.**

¹⁷Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame;
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

¡A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

¡A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

¡A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya,
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

a - le - lu - ya! ¡A - le - lu - ya!
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

*GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

²⁴[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;²⁵ but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ”

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY *Blessed Assurance* (ELW 638)



- 1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
- 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
- 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

Refrain



This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

*APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.* On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Trusting in God's abundant mercy, let us offer our prayers for a world in need.

A brief silence for reflection

O God, you call your church to announce the gospel of reconciliation and truth both near and far. Guide your church as it seeks your wisdom and shares it, trusting your Spirit bearing witness among us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You brought forth all creation and called it good. As we worship in your creation, remind us of the ways in which we can care for the health of this world and all that live in it. Direct policymakers to protect lands and seas. Bring rain to sun-parched fields and protect areas impacted by natural disasters. You desire peace among nations and peoples. Guard our neighborhoods from hatred, watch over police officers and firefighters, and teach us to advocate for those who live in fear. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You are gracious and merciful, comforting those who suffer any affliction especially Jeff, Bob, Geneva, Cherry, Winnie, Henry, Harry, Roy, Ellen, Ruth, Sally, Katie, Debi, those on our prayer list, and all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts. Sustain your people living with HIV/ AIDS, provide shelter for all who are unhoused, and release any who are unjustly imprisoned. You name each of us as your children. Guide our hospitality ministry to welcome all, our education ministry to equip us for faithful living, and our social ministry to enact the gospel in our community. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You send faithful people to proclaim freedom from sin and to renew your church. Encourage us by the witness of the faithful departed, so that we live into that same hope. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray, O God, for your everlasting presence, trusting that you hear our prayers, spoken and unspoken. We lift the prayers on the hearts and minds of this congregation this day (*prayers may be spoken aloud or offered silently*). Receive our prayers and answer us, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us share Christ's peace with one another.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN *We Are an Offering* (ELW 692)

Sing two times

The musical score is written on six staves of music. The lyrics are printed below the notes. The music is in a 7/8 time signature and features several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above the notes).

We lift our voic-es, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an
of-fer-ing. Lord, use our voic-es, Lord, use our hands, Lord, use our
lives, they are yours: we are an of-fer-ing. All that we have, all that we are,
all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you.
We lift our voic-es, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you:
we are an of-fer-ing, we are an of-fer-ing.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things.
Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us,
that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection
opened to us the way of everlasting life.

For in the night in which he was betrayed,
to explain God's love, to show it and share it,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Following this good command and trusting in God's good promises,
we humbly come before God in the words of the Lord's Prayer.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen**

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Come, for all is now ready.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life, and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of communion. Those who do not receive the elements of bread and wine are invited to come forward for a blessing. Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available.

COMMUNION SONG *Lamb of God*



Cor - de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



ten pie-dad de no - so - tros, ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.
have . . mer-cy up - on us, have . . mer - cy up - on us.



Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



ten pie-dad de no - so - tros, ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.
have . . mer-cy up - on us, have . . mer - cy up - on us.



Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



da - nos tu paz, da - nos tu paz.
grant us your peace, grant us your peace.

COMMUNION HYMN *Bread of Life from Heaven* (ELW 474)

Refrain



Bread of life from heav-en, your blood and bod - y giv - en, we



eat this bread and drink this cup un - til you come a - gain.



1	Break	now	the	bread	of	Christ's	sac -	ri -	fice;	giv -	ing
2	Seek	not	the	food	that	will	pass	a -	way;	set	your
3	Love	as	the	one	who,	in	love	for	you,	gave	him -
4	Dwell	in	the	one	who	now	dwells	in	you;	make	your
5	Drink	of	this	cup	and	de -	clare	his	death;	eat	this



thanks,	hun -	gry	ones,	gath -	er	round.	Eat,	all	of	you,	and	be
hearts	on	the	food	that	en -	dures.	Come,	learn	the	true	and	the
self	for	the	life	of	the	world.	Come	to	the	one	who	is
home	in	the	life -	giv -	ing	Word.	Know	on -	ly	Christ,	Ho -	ly
bread	and	be -	lieve	Eas -	ter	morn;	trust	his	re -	turn	and,	with



sat -	is -	fied;	in	Christ's	pres -	ence	the	loaves	will	a -	bound.
liv -	ing	way,	that	the	full -	ness	of	life	may	be	yours.
food	for	you,	that	your	hun -	ger	and	thirst	be	no	more.
One	of	God,	and	be -	lieve	in	the	truth	you	have	heard.
ev -	'ry	breath,	praise	the	one	in	whom	you	are	re -	born.

Refrain

*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and preserve you in grace.

Amen

*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table.

Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

*BLESSING

The God who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the smallest seed,
bless, keep, and sustain you ✠ now and to the end of the age. **Amen.**

*SENDING SONG *Great is Thy Faithfulness* (ELW 733)



1 Great is thy faith-ful-ness, O God my Fa-ther; there is no
2 Sum-mer and win-ter and spring-time and har-vest, sun, moon, and
3 Par-don for sin and a peace that en-dur-eth, thine own dear



shad-ow of turn-ing with thee; thou chang-est not, thy com-
stars in their cours-es a-bove join with all na-ture in
pres-ence to cheer and to guide; strength for to-day and bright



pas-sions they fail not; as thou hast been, thou for-ev-er wilt be.
man-i-fold wit-ness to thy great faith-ful-ness, mer-cy, and love.
hope for to-mor-row, bless-ings all mine, with ten thou-sand be-side!

Refrain



Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Morn-ing by



morn-ing new mer-cies I see; all I have need-ed thy



hand hath pro-vid-ed; great is thy faith-ful-ness, Lord, un-to me.

*DISMISSAL

[Jesus said,] “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.”

Mark 16:15

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Assisting in worship today:

Assisting Minister: Kelly Greb

Acolyte: Abigail Cardinal

Young Reader: Carissa Miller

Usher: Jonathan Ciora

Greeters:

Offering: Ava Niklewicz and Emma Niklewicz

Attendance Last Week: 51 + 3 zoom

Notes for the day's texts:

It is an age-old question: why is there evil in the world? In the parable of the wheat and the weeds Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. Having both weeds and wheat within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from the Lord's table we go forth to bear the fruit of justice and mercy.

Today's Music

This Is My Father's World. Text: Maltbie D. Babcock, 1858-1901, Music: Franklin L. Sheppard, 1852-1930, adapt. Public Domain.

Blessed Assurance. Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915, Music: Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830-1908. Public Domain.

We Are an Offering. Text: Dwight Liles, b. 1957, Music: Dwight Liles. Word Music Group, Inc..

Bread of Life from Heaven. Text: Susan R. Briehl, b. 1952, Music: Argentine traditional, refrain; Marty Haugen, b. 1950, stanzas. GIA Publications, Inc.

Great is Thy Faithfulness. Text: Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866-1960, Music: William M. Runyan, 1870-1957. Public Domain.

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Next Week's Readings

1 Kings 3:5-12 *Solomon's prayer for wisdom*

Psalms 119:129-136 *When your word is opened, it gives light and understanding*

Romans 8:26-39 *Nothing can separate us from God's love*

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 *Parables of the reign of heaven*